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## CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## INFORMATION REPORT

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Despred

1. Despred, the State transport agency, was established in 1945 but its activities were limited until nationalization in 1948. At that time, many of the specialists who had worked at privately-owned agencies were forced to seek employment with Despred.
2. Many of those who were employed by Despred have been dismissed, including the head assistant to the general manager Richard Rotholz, who was formerly manager of the Intercontinental Agency. Rotholz was the driving force in Despred and often served as the agency's representative to Iron Curtain countries. He was replaced by Georgi Atanasov, who had returned from a lengthy period of specialized training in the Soviet Union.
3. Until 1950 Despred was responsible for all international and internal transport of Bulgaria; government-owned enterprises and organizations were authorized to ship cargo only through Despred. This brought about a monopoly of all transport by one organization, and Despred was unable to cope with all of these activities. Serious shortcomings were felt in the work of this agency, and its senior officials exploited the situation for personal gain; they pocketed the company's transport fees, which were paid directly to the agency rather than to a government bank. In 1951 several senior officials were arrested, including Georgi Atanasov, general manager of Despred, and Lucho Chervenkov, Deputy Minister of Railroads. Atanasov, who was known to oppose Communism despite his membership in the Party, was arrested while he was on duty in the Soviet Zone of Austria. In 1952 Atanasov and Chervenkov had not been tried but were still under administrative arrest.
4. In 1950 Despred was reorganized, under the control of the Ministry of Foreign Trade, to become the only international transport agency in Bulgaria. It is responsible for the transport of all Bulgarian imports and exports. The internal transport department became a new transport agency named TEK (Transportna Ekspeditsiona Kantora), controlled by the Ministry of Communications.

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-3-

50X1

5. Despred's central office occupies the ground and first floors of the building at No. 9 Levski Street in Sofia. The second floor of the same building is occupied by the central office of TEK, known as OTEK.

TEK

6. TEK's activities have been limited since the reorganization. When Despred was responsible for all internal transport, government-owned enterprises were compelled to use the internal transport department of that agency, but since 1950, enterprises have been allowed to use their own transport system even though expenses involved exceed TEK's fees.
7. TEK has branches throughout Bulgaria and a representative at almost every railroad station. The head office is staffed by 10 or 12 men including the general manager, Dochev (fnu), three assistants to the general manager, a chief accountant ~~Mosidov (fnu)~~, an assistant to the accountant, and three or four cashiers.
8. Since 1951 one of TEK's main branches has been located at No. 38 Exarkh Yosif Street in Sofia. It has a staff of 40, including the general manager and his assistants, the chief accountant and his assistants, and the technical employees. This branch controls eight sub-branches, one of which is at the central railroad station and the others in the district railroad stations (rayonie gari). The largest of these, the office at the central railroad station, is staffed by about 50 men, while the others have only eight or 10 employees. These sub-branches are located at the following railroad stations: Voenna Rampa, ~~Golyama~~ Burzina (used for urgent shipments), Zakharna Fabrika (Sugar Factory), Poduene, Perlovets (used for timber and coal shipments), ~~Serdika~~, and ~~Golyama~~ Burzina, ~~Serdika~~, and Perlovets are freight stations, while the others are used by both passenger and freight trains.<sup>1</sup>
9. TEK is entitled to use the warehouses of the railroad stations. Suburban railroad stations have small and primitive storehouses, while the central station, which is used for most shipments, has large warehouses at Malka Burzina to the southeast of the passenger building. A few of these are of concrete construction with tile roofs. There are also some smaller warehouses at the same site.
10. TEK has a special railroad siding at its disposal. It has only a few trucks, which are in bad condition, for the transport of cargo from the railroad station to its destination. The transport of cargo from the railroad station is therefore usually arranged by the enterprise to which the cargo is destined.

1.   Comment: The 1952 Sofia telephone directory also lists a TEK branch at the Iskur station.

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